



# Action against dump to be investigated

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ALSIP — A spokeswoman for the Illinois attorney general's office said Tuesday that the office will investigate an allegation that it ordered the state Environmental Protection Agency to drop action against an Alsip dump because evidence was "too old."

A toxic dump at Chicago Industrial Waste Haulers, 4206 W. Shirley Lane, ordered cleaned up by the

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency last week, was under investigation by the Illinois EPA from 1985 to 1987.

A spokesman for the IEPA has said the agency asked the attorney general's office in June 1985 for permission to move against the company for violating hazardous waste disposal guidelines.

But, according to the IEPA spokesman, after the site was investigated, the attorney general's office informed the IEPA that the data

collected by the agency were too old to use to enforce any complaints against Chicago Industrial.

"That just doesn't sound like our office," said Maria Arza, spokeswoman for the attorney general's office. She declined further comment.

Arza said that because the case in question is several years old, her office would have to dig up case records stored in a warehouse. She said she would have more to say next week after reviewing the case.

Since the IEPA's 1985 request, Chicago Industrial was allowed to appeal the charges for several years until it closed and moved to Indiana.

The IEPA, which last inspected the site on Feb. 13, 1987, was told by the attorney general's office on July 1, 1987 that its information was too old to enforce complaints against

the company. On Nov. 23, 1987, the IEPA notified the attorney general's office that it was dropping all complaints against the company.

A spokesman for the U.S. EPA said the agency is expecting a final work plan on cleanup measures from the company by Friday. The plan is to outline the company's timeline for cleanup activities.

U.S. EPA spokesman Dan O'Riordan reversed an earlier statement that the dump would be cleaned up within the week.

"We would like to remove it within a week, it would be nice," he said. But it could take up to seven months to find a hazardous waste incinerator to accept the contaminants from the Alsip site, he said.

O'Riordan assured nearby residents that they are not at risk. "It

can be stabilized in such a way that it won't pose a threat."

One way is to seal the contaminants in properly secured containers, and either leave them on the site until an incinerator is found or move them to a landfill, he said.

O'Riordan said that though it may sound like a "bureaucratic process," the federal EPA is required to follow proper legal procedures in first allowing the company to clean up the premises.

He said the agency would have moved in and cleaned up the site itself if the site posed an imminent threat.

The dump, which is under guard, is closed and leaking hazardous chemicals from four or five large tanks, according to officials.

The tanks contain a highly flama-

ble mixture of oils and solvents, including benzene, a known cancer causing agent, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), which are linked to reproductive disorders, the U.S. EPA said.

The soil on and around the site and nearby Stony Creek need to be retested by Chicago Industrial for possible contamination, O'Riordan said. Initial tests at the site found low levels of contamination, he said.

"The major problem is what's in those tanks," O'Riordan said.

An Eldorado, Ark., incinerator had agreed to destroy the toxic materials, but a boiler explosion put the incinerator out of compliance with federal EPA guidelines.

Now a Chicago-area hazardous waste incinerator is being asked to accept the material, O'Riordan said.

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